

THE OCCURRENCE OF THE GENUS *STRANGALIA*  
SERVILLE (COL.: CERAMBYCIDAE) IN THE BRITISH  
ISLES

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## Introduction

There are some sixty British Longicorn Coleoptera, fairly representative of the European fauna. The two largest genera, *Strangalia* and *Leptura* L., sometimes grouped as one genus (Joy, 1932), contain respectively seven and six species, although a strong case has been made for the re-inclusion of *Leptura virens* L. (Allen, 1968) as, at least, an extinct species; it is currently omitted from the latest British catalogue (Kloet & Hincks, 1977).

The Cerambycidae, because of their handsome appearance, markings, elegant shape and long antennae, are without doubt among collectors' favourite captures: members of the genus *Strangalia* are no exception. The widespread use of pesticides has fortunately not affected the Longicornia too greatly as they are largely amphixylophagous. This paper records the distribution, habitat and ecology (where it is known) of *Strangalia*.

For brevity's sake county and vice-county alphabetical symbols are used (Balfour-Browne, 1931); italicized letters indicate that it is from there that the beetle has been most widely found; bracketed letters mean doubtful, unconfirmed or untraceable records; a dagger (†) signifies a fortuitous specimen imported from elsewhere; *post*-1970 captures are marked by an asterisk (\*).

*Strangalia revestita* (L.)

This is undoubtedly one of the very rarest of the British Cerambycidae, single examples of which occur unexpectedly at long, infrequent intervals. A few specimens were collected early last century (Stephens, 1831, 1839); by the 1860s its validity as an indigenous beetle was in question (Waterhouse, 1861). The name appears, however, in all the British catalogues, save one (Beare & Donisthorpe, 1904). Joy, 1932, excludes it from his work. Very few public or indeed private collections contain *S. revestita*; there are, for instance, just seven specimens of British provenance in the British Museum (Natural History) Collections, only one of which has a full data label. The earliest British record appears to be that of an example 'In mus. D. Beckwith.' (Marsham, 1802), present whereabouts unknown. There are two damaged specimens in the Hope Department of Entomology, Oxford, again data-less.

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The insect has a distribution largely confined to the Thames basin and a few other scattered localities.

ENGLAND: BD\* BK CB\* DM† MX NH SE SH SR WK (WW).

The imago has been swept from flowers and by beating apple trees and oaks. When it has been taken, it has usually been in the vicinity of woodlands. One of the latest examples was found crawling along a sandy heathland track (Allen, 1972). The larval pabulum is the wild cherry (*Prunus avium*); no larvae have yet been found in this country, although the tree is far from uncommon. June is the only recorded month of capture.

*S. nigra* (L.)

An insect which is mainly southern in range; there are only a few records of its capture north of the line R. Severn to the Wash. Nowadays, an increasingly uncommon little beetle, whose numbers appear to be in decline.

ENGLAND: BK CH DT EK (EC) (EN) (ES) EX L LR NH NO NS OX SD SE SH (SP) SR ST SW (WC) WK (WN) WO (WS) WX\*.

WALES: GM.

By sweeping flowers such as dog rose, ox-eye daisy, *Ranunculus Rubus*, various umbellifers, *Viburnum* and woodspure.. There is a solitary record of its having been swept from larch. The larval stages have not been described from this country (Duffy, 1953), but it has been suggested that the foodplants are deciduous (broad-leaved) trees (Freude, 1966). The adult is about from May to July.

*S. aurulenta* (F.)

One of the most beautiful native Cerambycids, banded ochreous-yellow and black, covered with thick golden pubescence, which, in living specimens, give it a glowing, almost iridescent appearance. It is mainly southern, south-western and western in range, although there are a few westerly records, some possibly adventitious. Not uncommon in a number of counties and apparently spreading slowly in Wales.

ENGLAND: (DM) EC GW HT (L) MX ND NS SD SH SS WC WX\*.

WALES: GM RA.

SCOTLAND: Recorded without any details (Fowler, 1883).

IRELAND: SK WA WC WI.

By sweeping *Angelica*, brambles, broom, *Pyrus*, scabious and various umbellifers. The larva is chiefly found in oak, it is also associated with alder, ash, aspen, beech, birch, horse chestnut,

sour cherry, Spanish chestnut, walnut and willow (Duffy, 1953). The mature beetle occurs from June until August.

*S. quadrifasciata* (L.)

A very widely distributed species which is becoming scarcer. It is easily distinguished from *S. maculata* because of its heavier build and broader, less variable black elytral fasciae.

ENGLAND: BD BK CB CH CU DM DT DY\* EC EK EN  
ES EX EY GW\* HF\* HT IW L LN MX ND  
NE NH NM NN NS NY OX SD SE SH SN  
SP SR\* SS ST SW\* SY WK WL WN WO WS  
WX WY.

WALES: BR GM MM MN PB.

SCOTLAND: AM AS\* B CT DF EI\* EL HD KI (LA) M  
PC PM\* PN\* SS WI\*.

IRELAND: WC WI\*.

A localized insect, sometimes quite common where it does occur. It is essentially a lover of sunshine and is most frequent on hot, sultry days. It settles on *Angelica*, bracken, brambles, hawthorn, hogweed, meadowsweet, ragwort, *Rubus*, *Spiraea*, thistles, valerian and woody nightshade. The larva feeds in alder, aspen, beech, birch (its favourite pabulum), hazel, oak, poplar and willow. It has also been found in spruce (Duffy, 1953). The beetle has been taken as early as March, but more usually from June until August.

*S. maculata* (Poda)

The most widely distributed of all the *Strangalia* species, ranging from Northumberland southwards throughout almost all of England. Central Wales still requires to be more thoroughly worked as does Ireland, although it has been remarked (Stelfox, 1937) that this beetle is probably quite widespread in the latter country, the lack of records being due to a scarcity of observers rather than to that of the beetle. In Scotland it is still very rare.

ENGLAND: BD BK\* BX CB CH CU DM DT (DY) EC EK  
EN ES\* EX\* EY GE\* GW\* HF\* HT HU IW  
LN LR ML MX MY ND NE NH NM NO NS  
NW\* OX SD SE SH SL SN SR\* SS ST SW \*SY\*  
WC WK\* WL WN\* WO WS WW WX\* WY.

WALES: CD CR GM MM\* MN PB.

SCOTLAND: B KB.

IRELAND: CW DO KK NK SK SL WC WI.

A local, often common species which, like *S. quadrifasciata*, prefers warm sunny days when it may be seen in short flight and settling to feed on a variety of flowers, including *Achillea*, *Angelica*, brambles, dogrose, hawthorn, hogweed (a great favourite), honeysuckle, leek, meadowsweet, *Oenanthe*, *Philadelphus*, privet, rambler

roses, *Rubus*, *Spiraea*, sweet william, thistles and *Viburnum*. The principal food of the larva is birch, but by no means confined to that tree: it is also found in ash, aspen, beech, hazel, hornbeam, oak, willow, Spanish chestnut and willow. It is not averse to conifers and attacks *Picea*.

*S. maculata* is particularly subject to extremely variable elytral markings, ranging from albinotic to melanic forms. These aberrant forms are very stable and more often than not outnumber the type species in a given locality (Lee & Warsop, 1981). Illustrations in British books on Coleoptera all, save one (Lyneborg, 1977), depict one or other aberration.

British Coleopterists writing in the early part of last century refer to some of these varietal forms (Marsham, 1802; Turton, 1806; Stephens, 1829); two varieties were still catalogued until the 1860s (Waterhouse, 1858; Crotch, 1863); thereafter the names are dropped until the late 1940s (Kaufmann, 1946, 1948). It suffices to say that British cataloguers seem unwilling to include the many colour variations which exist here.

The following aberrations of *S. maculata* have been found in the British Isles:—

ab. *impunctata* Mulsant. (Planet, 1924, fig. 24.)

ENGLAND: SR.

ab. *externepunctata* Mulsant. (Martyn, 1792, pl. 27, fig. 10).

ENGLAND: IW LN NE\* SD SR SY\* WK.

IRELAND: WI.

ab. *stelligera* ab. nov. Anterior fasciae absent and replaced on each elytron by a large central, stellate, concave pentagonal maculation bearing a comet-like tail pointing downwards on the side nearest to the suture. The remaining fasciae fused and confluent at the elytral sides and suture, and with the apical yellow spot greatly reduced, exactly as in ab. *apicalis* Kaufmann.



Fig. 1 Right elytron of  
*Strangalia maculata* Poda.  
ab. *stelligera* nov.  
(enlarged)

ENGLAND: SY\* (Sheffield, A. Brackenbury, Esq.)

ab. *mediopunctata* Kaufmann.

ENGLAND: EN LN NE\* NS SD SR WK.

ab. *binotata* Mulsant. (Linssen, 1959, pl. 122, fig. 10).

ENGLAND: CU IW NO SH WY.

ab. *nigricornis* Stierlin.

ENGLAND: IW.

ab. *separata* Kaufmann. (Fowler, 1890, pl. 122, fig. 10).

ENGLAND: BK CH EC EX HF HT LN ND NE\* NO NS SD SH  
SR SW SY\* WW.

ab. *subspinosa* F. (Waterhouse, 1858; Crotch, 1863).

ENGLAND: EN LN SH SY\*.

ab. *seminotata* Kaufmann.

ENGLAND: BK ND NH SH SY\*.

ab. *disconotata* Pic. (Fowler, 1890, pl. 122, fig. 9; Stelfox, 1937,  
fig. 3).

ENGLAND: DT EY HF LN LR MY ND SD SH SR\* SS  
SW SY\* WC WW WY.

WALES: MN.

IRELAND: WI.

ab. *undulata* Mulsant. (Shaw, 1806).

ENGLAND: HT LN SD SH WW WY.

WALES: MN.

ab. *conjuncta* Kaufmann. (Spry & Shuckard, 1861, pl. 79, fig. 1;  
Wood, 1883, fig., p. 153; Joy, 1932, pl. 111, fig. 10).

ENGLAND: EN SD SR SY\* WW.

IRELAND: WI.

ab. *manca* Schaufuss. ENGLAND: LN LR.

ab. *suturalis* Kaufmann. ENGLAND: BK LN SH WO WY.

ab. *sylvestris* Kaufmann. ENGLAND: LR.

ab. *dentato-suturalis* Kaufmann. ENGLAND: BK LN NM SD SE.

ab. *kriecheldorffi* Wagner. ENGLAND: LN.

ab. *sinuata* F. Reputedly British (Marsham, 1802, Stephens, 1829),  
but no specimens seem to exist except one, found by  
Dr. A. H. Newton in 1942 in Yealmpton, which has  
the fasciae of *sinuata* and sutural markings resembling  
*suturalis*.

ENGLAND: SD.

ab. *apicalis* Kaufmann. (Donovan, 1794, pl. 84, fig. 4).

ENGLAND: HT SR WO WW.

ab. *dayremi* Pic. (Rye, 1866, pl. 14, fig. 1).

ENGLAND: EX LN.

ab. *kaufmanni* Pic. ENGLAND: LN.

ab. *bifenestrata* Pic. ENGLAND: NM WO.

*S. maculata* and all its variations occur from May to September.

### *S. melanura* (L.)

A well-distributed species except for an area stretching from south-western Wales to the Lake district. There is a solitary Scottish

record, unconfirmed, and an Irish example in the National Collection at Dublin, *sine data*.

The sexes are dimorphous, the female being larger than the male and more brightly coloured red and black than the latter.

ENGLAND: BD BK\* BX CB CU DM DT DY EC EK EN ES  
EX EY GE\* GW\* HF HT HU IW L LN (LR)  
ND NE NH NM NO NS NW NY OX SD SE  
SH\* SN SR\* SS ST SW\* WC WK WL WO WS\*  
WW WX WY.

WALES: GM MM\* MN.

SCOTLAND: (BW).

IRELAND: Locality unknown.

A fairly common, occasionally abundant insect, but rather local. The adults may be captured from a variety of blossoms, including brambles, *Euphorbia*, dogrose, hawthorn, hemlock, hogweed, honeysuckle, ox-eye daisy, *Phaseolus*, privet, *Rubus*, scabious, thistles, *Tilea*, *Viburnum* and yarrow. The larva feeds in the decayed, slender branches of oak and in the roots of *Cytisus*; it has also been found in sycamore (Duffy, 1953) and in spruce (Prof. Owen *in litt.*). Imagines occur from May onwards until September.

### *S. attenuata* (L.)

First described as British, habitat unknown (Marsham, 1802), this species has been extinct in Britain for the last 150 years. . . . somewhat doubtfully indigenous . . . (Fowler, 1890); ' . . . is decidedly doubtfully indigenous. I can learn nothing trustworthy about it, and why it is kept in the *Catalogue*, . . .' (Donisthorpe, 1898). Nevertheless, forty years later, the last-named writes without comment, ' . . . Windsor Forest (Desvignes); bought at the sale of his collection by the late E.W. Janson (*teste* the late Oliver Janson).' (Donisthorpe, 1939). That information is repeated more or less verbatim in a footnote (Allen, 1957) and again ' . . . certainly taken in Windsor Forest . . .' (Allen, 1968).

Omitted from their catalogue (Kloet & Hincks, 1945), as it had been from that of others (Beare & Donisthorpe, 1904; Beare, 1930), *S. attenuata* was re-introduced to the current list (Kloet & Hincks, 1977) as a species now extinct.

Originally found near Salisbury; ' . . . several specimens have been captured at different periods . . .' (Stephens, 1831). ' . . . Salisbury and Southend.' (Stephens, 1839): these records must be added to that of T. Desvignes, who was a reliable collector unlikely to have mis-identified the species.

ENGLAND: BK SE SW.

What has happened to Stephens' 'several' examples is open to question. There are two *attenuata* simply labelled 'ex coll. Power'

in the British Museum (Natural History) Collections, and another pair in the Dale collection, Hope Department of Entomology, Oxford; one is a male specimen with the label 'Little'; the other, a female, has the simple datum 'Burney, 1846'.

The beetle bears a superficial resemblance to *S. maculata*, but it is a much smaller and more slender insect with a rounded pronotum and lacking the two hind tibial spurs which characterize *maculata*. It is, however, faintly possible that *attenuata* exists in some old collections, wrongly determined as micromorphous specimens of *maculata*. *S. attenuata* was recorded from flowers in June in this country. It has since occurred very rarely in imported timber (Duffy, 1953). Abroad, the larva feeds in horse chestnut and decaying oak (Freude, 1966, Harde, 1984).

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